

# Krystal Roach Interview

Fri, May 03, 2024, Total Time: 21:34

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

commuted, workplace, study abroad program

## SPEAKERS

Interviewee: Krystal Roach

Interviewer: Fatemeh Rezaei

### Fatemeh Rezaei

This is Fatemeh Rezaei. It's May 3rd, 2024, at 3:30pm. I'm with Krystal Roach, we are on the online Zoom platform, and we are going to begin our oral history interview for the University of Baltimore Stories, the 100th Anniversary Oral History Project. The purpose of this project is to celebrate the university's centennial by preserving the memory of those influenced by the University of Baltimore over the years. We will be creating a digital archive and exhibit and making these recordings available online. Hello! Thank you so much for giving us your time.

### Krystal Roach

Thank you for having me.

### Fatemeh Rezaei

So, I'm going to start with some simple questions. Where and when were you born?

### Krystal Roach

I was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1993.

### Fatemeh Rezaei

Oh, nice. So, what was your family life like growing up?

### Krystal Roach

So, I grew up with my parents, and my younger brother. And I had quite a few family members who were very involved in my life, including my grandmother, aunts, uncles, you know, everybody just kind of pitching in and making sure that everyone had what everyone needed whenever someone needed a hand trying to really help with that sort of stuff as well.

### Fatemeh Rezaei

Where did you go to school?

**Krystal Roach**

So, I went to Pikesville High School. And then before I came to University of Baltimore, I went to Coppin State University for undergrad, and then I got my masters at University of Baltimore.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

What was your major like for undergrad?

**Krystal Roach**

So, for undergrad, it's a bit of an interesting story because I originally came to Coppin as a nursing major because Coppin has a very good nursing program in Maryland. And once I got into the area where I was about to do clinicals, I realized that this isn't really for me. I'd always had a really big passion for psychology. It was something that I really enjoyed studying in high school. But I was told that there was no money in it. So, I said, well, I can't go to college to get a degree where I'm not going to be able to make money.

That kind of defeats my purpose for it in some ways, and so I was very fortunate to study abroad, and I met a person there, who was a psychologist, and she said, 'Oh, you can make money in it, you just have to get a graduate degree.' So, when I came back, I decided that I was going to take that leap and change my major to Applied Psychology. And so, I started doing research. And that's how I found my way to the University of Baltimore for my masters.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

So, you didn't change your major when you were in Coppin, right?

**Krystal Roach**

I did, yes.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

You did, okay, got it. So how was studying at Coppin for your undergrad? I mean, they're close, like, we are both in Baltimore City. Tell, tell us about your experience studying there.

**Krystal Roach**

I absolutely loved studying at Coppin. And I can only say good things about it. I was very fortunate. I was a first-generation college student. And so, my parents were very supportive about my desire to go to college. Many of my family members were very encouraging. But in terms of actually being able to provide me with the actual advice of what to do in college and the tools and things that I actually needed. They couldn't really provide that kind of information. And I find that Coppin is extremely accepting of first-generation college students.

They had a summer bridge program, and that really helped me figure out what college was going to be about, you know, outside of just looking at movies and things like that. And it really helped me develop a schedule, develop a plan, and set me up for a good start. I also really enjoyed the community there. I was involved in many organizations. The faculty was really great. And of course, I had the opportunity to study abroad so I can only say, you know, great things.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

Where did you go?

**Krystal Roach**

South Korea.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

Oh, cool.

**Krystal Roach**

I went to Guangzhou South Korea for a semester, and Coppin was very supportive. They helped me acquire funding to go so I was able to go on a full scholarship to study there.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

For one semester?

**Krystal Roach**

Yes.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

That's really nice. A very nice experience.

**Krystal Roach**

Yes, I definitely think so.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

So, why UB? What happened?

**Krystal Roach**

So, when I was at Coppin, I began to study, and I was doing research, I began to really look into things along the lines of mental health and mental wellness. And I began working with a faculty member there. Her name was Dr. Cameron. And she was doing studies on mental health, stigmatization, and college students, and mental illness, stigmatization. And so I began working with her and realized that, you know, this area of mental well-being was really where I was passionate, and I wanted to do research. And so at that time, I was looking at social psychology programs because I was told that's where you should be with the master's degree, you should go to social psychology.

And Dr. Cameron had attended some sort of conference and met Sharon Glazer. And when she came back from that, she said, 'Krystal, listen, Sharon Glazer's doing a lot of research that I think you would be interested in. I know you don't know a lot about IO psychology, but look into it, consider it. And, you know, maybe apply there because she's a good person, and I think your personalities would match well together.' And so I ended up applying after looking up Industrial-Organizational psychology, I saw that they had a whole area in occupational health and occupational stress that aligned well with what I was

interested in. So I said, Well, I hope the rest of the information is good, but I'm going to apply here, and I guess the rest is history.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

What year was that?

**Krystal Roach**

That would have been in 2015.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

2015. And you didn't move to Baltimore City, right? Where do you live?

**Krystal Roach**

I live in Pikesville, Maryland, and I commuted every day that I had classes. When I was at Coppin, I stayed on campus. But for my master's degree, I just commuted. I had my own car by then and everything, so it was a very easy commute. And I was able to, you know, get to the university very easily. So that was very, very, very good.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

So could you describe a little bit about the campus atmosphere and student culture when you were a student here?

**Krystal Roach**

So, I think the one thing that I remember the most is the collaborative culture. People were really looking out for each other and trying to help each other. So, I spent many, many times in the business building with my classmates all huddled around a table, all trying to solve, you know, a statistics problem or study for a big exam with a big whiteboard. Everybody's writing down, you know, articles trying to remember saying, 'No, that's not that article, that's this article.' And then all of us eventually saying, you know, we haven't eaten in like eight hours, maybe we should go to Chipotle. And us all like running over there and running back.

And I think at the time, we were all like, oh, my gosh, this is so miserable. We're studying so much. But I definitely think like looking back on it, it was really nice to have those shared moments. It was a really good bonding experience with my classmates. And we still look back and tell stories to each other and things like that, like, 'Don't you remember that one time we were in the building, and we didn't leave until like 2 a.m. and they had to kick us out.' So I think that's really what I remember the most about the overall like atmosphere

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

Did you have a full-time job when you were studying here?

**Krystal Roach**

So at the time, I knew that I wanted to get my PhD. So, I put a lot of my time into trying to do research. I was able to work for I think it was like 20 hours in the psychology office. And through that I was able to

you know, get more involved in some projects and things along the lines of that. And outside of that I worked jobs, you know, here and there trying to make some extra money. So not necessarily a full-time job, I would say. I think my cat has decided oh wants to make a visit. What are you doing, Gizmo?  
[Laughs]

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

That's nice. So, did you get involved in any student organizations when you were here?

**Krystal Roach**

Not really student organizations, I would say. But I was very involved with things that people were doing in I-O psychology. So, Dr. Mitchell in the I-O Psychology program would put together a lot of different events for us to meet graduates, for example, and for us to meet people who were in the area in industry, so we could figure out what they did while they were in school and what their career path looks like. So, I was involved in a lot of those types of activities.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

So, you graduated in 2018, right?

**Krystal Roach**

That's right.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

Okay. Are there any memories that you have? Like any specific or memorable events that happened when you were here.

**Krystal Roach**

I think one of the most memorable things that I have is definitely that there was a study abroad opportunity in the I-O Psychology program when I was there. And we were all able to go to Barcelona. And so there were many people in my year who all went, and that experience of traveling with your classmates and learning about cross-cultural organizational psychology while also experiencing a new culture. For me, it was my first time anywhere in Europe. And so that was an experience like, 'Wow, you know, I didn't think that I would be able to really get here, and here I am.' And it just really helped open things up for me as well, like, dream a bit bigger. Maybe, you know, consider that you can do this type of stuff. So, it was very nice for me.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

And then you went to Michigan, to get your PhD.

**Krystal Roach**

Yes.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

Tell us about that.

**Krystal Roach**

Um, so I really wanted to apply to Central Michigan because the person I wanted to work with Terry Beehr was there, and we had learned about him in all of our classes. And I just thought, you know, I don't think I'm going to get in here. There is another faculty member, too. I was looking at all of her research, Kim O'Brien, and I was like, 'Wow, this is so interesting. This is right up my alley. Like, okay, there are these famous people here, there's no way I'm ever going to get in. So, I might as well just not apply.' And I was talking to Dr. Sharon Glazer, and she said, you know, the worst thing they can do is say no, so you should apply.

And so, I applied, and I got in, I got into a few other programs as well. But I was able to go visit there and meet with the faculty and meet with the other students, and it felt extremely welcoming to me. It was very collaborative instead of competitive, and that was what I was looking for. I don't really do well in extremely competitive environments, where you have to worry about 'Oh, is this one going to stab me in the back or that one?'

And I think what I also really liked about University of Baltimore is my classmates genuinely had my best interest in mind, and if there was ever a situation where, 'Oh, I have to miss class, for some reason or the other,' I knew that they would take notes for me and pass them, you know, pass them to me. It wouldn't be a situation where they were like, 'Oh, well, you should have been in class then.' Everyone was really trying to help everyone.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

Very nice. So how did your time at University of Baltimore influence your career choices?

**Krystal Roach**

I think that it really helped me see that the path that I was interested in was the right path for me. I had a lot of opportunities to conduct research, which was something that I had done a little bit in undergrad but in grad school, I had a lot more of a hands-on experience. I was able to really dig deep into some data, I was able to do my own thesis. And that experience really set me up for realizing that this was something that I was interested in.

At the time, I really knew that I wanted to go into like an academia area. And so the faculty there had attempted to give me as many opportunities as possible to sit in on classes to observe different methods of teaching. And I just thought that that was extremely helpful in letting me get kind of like a realistic job preview of what I was going to be looking for. I also got to do some research admin tasks, which I had done in undergrad as well.

But it helped me reaffirm that this is what I'm interested in, this is what I'm doing. And so, I'm still interested in it, so I should keep doing it. I also had the opportunity to work very closely with Dr. Glazer. And in working closely with her, that's where I found that my big passion area is the study of burnout. And that really shaped my career. It's what I ended up studying for my dissertation. And even now, in my workplace, I still try to flip things like burnout, and resilience, and all those types of things in anywhere possible.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

That's nice. So, my understanding is you also are teaching at UB as an adjunct faculty, right?

**Krystal Roach**

Correct.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

Tell me about that, like, how's it working at UB?

**Krystal Roach**

Um, so I really enjoy working at UB as an adjunct. Everyone has been very welcoming, very supportive, very interested in what I'm doing with my career. But I will admit, it was a bit strange the first few times that I taught, especially because I felt like I was just here. Which, of course, I wasn't, it was years later, but it still felt like wow, you know, it's really full circle. Now I'm the one that's the professor, and they're the students, but I still kind of feel like I'm the student. And it was a very unique experience, I think, and something that's still kind of strange for me to look back on.

Like coming back in the Fall, I'm going to be teaching one of the classes that my professor taught to me. So, it's extremely, like full circle. And when I was talking to some of my other classmates about it from, you know, my year, they were saying things, like, 'I'm glad it's you that's going to be teaching it, you know, that makes sense.' And so, it was really nice, because I remember studying for that class and sitting with all of my classmates and really working hard in that class. And so now it's like, wow, you know, now I get to be the one to tell students that you need to work hard in this class. [Laughs]

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

That's really nice. That's a very interesting experience. Studying in a place and also working there later. It's a different experience.

**Krystal Roach**

I think so. I think so. And it's still kind of hard for me because if I'm emailing someone, I'm like, 'Okay, well, now we're colleagues. But from my perspective, I still think like, I'm not your colleague, I'm your student.'

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

So, could you tell us a little bit about your research interest as well?

**Krystal Roach**

Yes. So, my research interests really lay in the Occupational Health and occupational stress area. Essentially, the way I like to describe it is I'm interested in all the ways that work can go wrong, and the workplace can go wrong. So, if there's a positive concept, I'm interested in the negative side of it. So, my predominant area of study is burnout in the workplace. But outside of that I study things like counterproductive work behaviors, like stealing time, and I have recently been more interested in mentoring, specifically negative mentoring experiences.

So when you're in your workplace, and you have a mentor who is providing you very bad mentoring, maybe they're a bit malicious towards you, or you are a mentor in your workplace, and you have a protege who's trying to sabotage you or something like that. I'm very interested in why that happens when it happens and the outcomes of that happening. Yeah, that's like my bread and butter area.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

Very, very, very nice topics. So, I think I asked all of the questions that I wanted to ask. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us about your time at UB? Or UBalt, I should say UBalt! [Laughs]

**Krystal Roach**

I know I know that it's UBalt, but I've always said UB, and I just can't get into the habit of saying UBalt. I know that I should, but it's funny.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

But it was UB when you were a student?

**Krystal Roach**

Yes, everybody said UB.

And it's very interesting because when we had the study abroad program, Dr. Glazer set that whole thing up. When I first came to UB, there was a program where you could go to a winter school. And it was a very good opportunity, but we were only able to send one student from the whole I-O program, which in my year, there were like, 10 people at least that wanted to go. So, it's like, okay, what do we do? So, she took the initiative to actually talk with her colleagues and build a study abroad program so that more students would be able to have the opportunity outside of this winter school. And all that's to say, we ended up studying at the University of Barcelona, so it was UB meet UB.

**Fatemeh Rezaei**

Oh. [Laughs.] That's interesting. Okay, thank you. Thank you so much.

**Krystal Roach**

Thank you.